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Jno. G. Locke
From his Father
at Washington

MR. WEBSTER'S

SPEECH

ON THE

Greek Revolution.

WASHINGTON CITY:
PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY JOHN S. MEEHAN,
COLUMBIAN OFFICE, NORTH E STREET.

1824.

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MR. WEBSTER'S SPEECH

ON THE

GREEK REVOLUTION.

On the 8th of December, 1823, Mr. Webster presented, in the House of Representatives, the following resolution:

"*Resolved*, That provision ought to be made, by law, for defraying the expense incident to the appointment of an Agent or Commissioner to Greece, whenever the President shall deem it expedient to make such appointment."

The House having, on the 19th of January, resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole, and this resolution being taken into consideration, Mr. Webster spoke to the following effect:

I am afraid, Mr. Chairman, that, so far as my part in this discussion is concerned, those expectations which the public excitement, existing on the subject, and certain associations, easily connected with it, have conspired to raise, may be disappointed. An occasion which calls the attention to a spot, so distinguished, so connected with interesting recollections, as Greece, may naturally excite something of warmth and enthusiasm. In a grave, political discussion, however, it is necessary that that feeling should be chastised. I shall endeavour properly to repress it, although it is impossible that it should be

altogether extinguished. We must, indeed, fly beyond the civilized world, we must pass the dominion of law, and the boundaries of knowledge; we must, more especially, withdraw ourselves from this place, and the scenes which here surround us, if we would separate ourselves, altogether, from the influence of all those memorials of herself which ancient Greece has transmitted for the admiration, and the benefit, of mankind. This free form of government, this popular assembly, the common council, held for the common good, where have we contemplated its earliest models? This practice of free debate, and public discussion, the contest of mind with mind, and that popular eloquence, which, if it were now here, on a subject like this, would move the stones of the Capitol, whose was the language in which all these were first exhibited? Even the Edifice in which we assemble, these proportioned columns, this ornamented architecture, all remind us that Greece has existed, and that we, like the rest of mankind, are greatly her debtors. But I have not introduced this motion in the vain hope of discharging any thing of this accumulated debt of centuries. I have not acted upon the expectation, that we, who have inherited this obligation from our ancestors, should now attempt to pay it, to those who may seem to have inherited, from *their* ancestors, a right to receive payment. My object is nearer and more immediate. I wish to take occasion of the struggle of an interesting and gallant people, in the cause of liberty and Christianity, to draw the attention of the House to the circumstances which have accompanied that struggle, and to the principles which appear

to have governed the conduct of the great States of Europe, in regard to it; and to the effects and consequences of these principles, upon the independence of nations, and especially upon the institutions of free governments. What I have to say of Greece, therefore, concerns the modern, not the ancient; the living, and not the dead. It regards her, not as she exists in history, triumphant over time, and tyranny, and ignorance; but as she now is, contending, against fearful odds, for being, and for the common privilege of human nature.

As it is never difficult to recite commonplace remarks, and trite aphorisms; so it may be easy, I am aware, on this occasion, to remind me of the wisdom which dictates to men a care of their own affairs, and admonishes them, instead of searching for adventures abroad, to leave other men's concerns in their own hands. It may be easy to call this resolution *Quixotic*, the emanation of a crusading or propagandist spirit. All this, and more, may be readily said; but all this, and more, will not be allowed to fix a character upon this proceeding, until that is proved, which it takes for granted. Let it first be *shown*, that, in this question, there is nothing which can affect the interest, the character, or the duty of this country. Let it be proved, that we are not called upon, by either of these considerations, to express an opinion on the subject to which the resolution relates. Let this be proved, and then it will, indeed, be made out, that neither ought this resolution to pass, nor ought the subject of it to have been mentioned in the communication of the President to us. But, in my opinion, this cannot be shown. In my judgment, the subject is interesting

to the people and the government of this country, and we are called upon, by considerations of great weight and moment, to express our opinions upon it. These considerations, I think, spring from a sense of our own duty, our character, and our own interest. I wish to treat the subject on such grounds, exclusively, as are truly *American*; but then, in considering it as an American question, I cannot forget the age in which we live, the prevailing spirit of the age, the interesting questions which agitate it, and our own peculiar relation, in regard to these interesting questions. Let this be, then, and as far as I am concerned, I hope it will be, purely an American discussion; but let it embrace, nevertheless, every thing that fairly concerns America; let it comprehend, not merely her present advantage, but her permanent interest, her elevated character, as one of the free states of the world, and her duty towards those great principles, which have hitherto maintained the relative independence of nations, and which have, more especially, made her what she is.

At the commencement of the session, the President, in the discharge of the high duties of his office, called our attention to the subject, to which this resolution refers. "A strong hope," says that communication, "has been long entertained, founded on the heroic struggle of the Greeks, that they would succeed in their contest, and resume their equal station among the nations of the earth. It is believed that the whole civilized world takes a deep interest in their welfare. Although no power has declared in their favour, yet none, according to our information, has taken part against them. Their cause and their

name, have protected them from dangers, which might, ere this, have overwhelmed any other people. The ordinary calculations of interest, and of acquisition with a view to aggrandizement, which mingle so much in the transactions of nations, seem to have had no effect in regard to them. From the facts which have come to our knowledge, there is good cause to believe that their enemy has lost, for ever, all dominion over them: that Greece will become again an independent nation."

It has appeared to me, that the House should adopt some resolution, reciprocating these sentiments, so far as it should approve them. More than twenty years have elapsed, since Congress first ceased to receive such a communication from the President, as could properly be made the subject of a general answer. I do not mean to find fault with this relinquishment of a former, and an ancient practice. It may have been attended with inconveniences, which justified its abolition. But, certainly, there was one advantage belonging to it; and that is, that it furnished a fit opportunity for the expression of the opinion of the Houses of Congress, upon those topics in the Executive communication, which were not expected to be made the immediate subjects of direct legislation. Since, therefore, the President's message does not now receive a general answer, it has seemed to me to be proper, that in some mode, agreeable to our own usual form of proceeding, we should express our sentiments upon the important and interesting topics on which it treats.

If the sentiments of the message in respect to Greece be proper, it is equally proper that this

House should reciprocate those sentiments. The present resolution is designed to have that extent, and no more. If it pass, it will leave any future proceeding where it now is, in the discretion of the Executive Government. It is but an expression, under those forms in which the House is accustomed to act, of the satisfaction of the House with the general sentiments expressed in regard to this subject in the message, and of its readiness to defray the expense incident to any inquiry for the purpose of further information, or any other agency which the President, in his discretion, shall see fit, in whatever manner, and at whatever time, to institute. The whole matter is still left in his judgment, and this resolution can in no way restrain its unlimited exercise.

I might well, Mr. Chairman, avoid the responsibility of this measure, if it had, in my judgment, any tendency to change the policy of the country. With the general course of that policy, I am quite satisfied. The nation is prosperous, peaceful, and happy ; and I should very reluctantly put its peace, prosperity, or happiness, at risk. It appears to me, however, that this resolution is strictly conformable to our general policy, and not only consistent with our interests, but even demanded by a large and liberal view of those interests.

It is certainly true, that the just policy of this country, is, in the first place, a peaceful policy. No nation ever had less to expect from forcible aggrandizement. The mighty agents which are working out our greatness, are time, industry, and the arts. Our augmentation is by growth, not by acquisition; by internal de-

velopement, not by external accession. No schemes can be suggested to us, so magnificent as the prospects which a sober contemplation of our own condition, unaided by projects, uninfluenced by ambition, fairly spreads before us. A country of such vast extent, with such varieties of soil and climate; with so much public spirit and private enterprise; with a population increasing so much beyond former examples, with capacities of improvement not only unapplied or unexhausted, but even, in a great measure, as yet, unexplored; so free in its institutions, so mild in its laws, so secure in the title it confers on every man to his own acquisitions; needs nothing but time and peace to carry it forward to almost any point of advancement.

In the next place, I take it for granted, that the policy of this country, springing from the nature of our government, and the spirit of all our institutions, is, so far as it respects the interesting questions which agitate the present age, on the side of liberal and enlightened sentiments. The age is extraordinary; the spirit that actuates it, is peculiar and marked; and our own relation to the times we live in, and to the questions which interest them, is equally marked and peculiar. We are placed, by our good fortune, and the wisdom and valour of our ancestors, in a condition in which we *can* act no obscure part. Be it for honour, or be it for dishonour, whatever we do, is not likely to escape the observation of the world. As one of the free states among the nations, as a great and rapidly rising Republic, it would be impossible for us, if we were so disposed, to prevent our principles,

our sentiments, and our example, from producing some effect upon the opinions and hopes of society throughout the civilized world. It rests probably with ourselves to determine, whether the influence of these shall be salutary or pernicious.

It cannot be denied that the great political question of this age, is, that between absolute and regulated governments. The substance of the controversy is, whether society shall have any part in its own government. Whether the form of government shall be that of limited monarchy, with more or less mixture of hereditary power, or wholly elective, or representative, may perhaps be considered as subordinate. The main controversy is between that absolute rule, which, while it promises to govern well, means nevertheless to govern without control, and that regulated or constitutional system, which restrains sovereign discretion, and asserts that society may claim, as matter of right, some effective power in the establishment of the laws which are to regulate it. The spirit of the times sets with a most powerful current, in favour of these last mentioned opinions. It is opposed, however, whenever and wherever it shows itself, by certain of the great potentates of Europe; and it is opposed on grounds as applicable in one civilized nation as in another, and which would justify such opposition in relation to the United States, as well as in relation to any other state, or nation, if time and circumstance should render such opposition expedient.

What part it becomes this country to take on a question of this sort, so far as it is called upon to take any part, cannot be doubtful. Our side of this

question is settled for us, even without our own volition. Our history, our situation, our character, necessarily decide our position and our course, before we have even time to ask whether we have an option. Our place is on the side of free institutions. From the earliest settlement of these states, their inhabitants were accustomed, in a greater or less degree, to the enjoyment of the powers of self-government; and for the last half century, they have sustained systems of government entirely representative, yielding to themselves the greatest possible prosperity, and not leaving them without distinction and respect among the nations of the earth. This system we are not likely to abandon; and while we shall no farther recommend its adoption to other nations, in whole or in part, than it may recommend itself by its visible influence on our own growth and prosperity, we are, nevertheless, interested, to resist the establishment of doctrines which deny the legality of its foundations. We stand as an equal among nations, claiming the full benefit of the established international law; and it is our duty to oppose, from the earliest to the latest moment, any innovations upon that code, which shall bring into doubt or question our own equal and independent rights.

I will now, Mr. Chairman, advert to those pretensions, put forth by the Allied Sovereigns of continental Europe, which seem to me calculated, if unresisted, to bring into disrepute the principles of our government, and indeed to be wholly incompatible with any degree of national independence. I do not introduce these considerations for the sake of topics. I am not about to declaim against crowned heads,

nor to quarrel with any country for preferring a form of government different from our own. The choice that we exercise for ourselves, I am quite willing to leave also to others. But it appears to me that the pretensions of which I have spoken, are wholly inconsistent with the independence of nations generally, without regard to the question, whether their governments be absolute, monarchical and limited, or purely popular and representative. I have a most deep and thorough conviction, that a new era has arisen in the world, that new and dangerous combinations are taking place, promulgating doctrines, and fraught with consequences, wholly subversive, in their tendency, of the public law of nations, and of the general liberties of mankind. Whether this be so, or not, is the question which I now propose to examine, upon such grounds of information, as the common and public means of knowledge disclose.

Every body knows that, since the final restoration of the Bourbons to the throne of France, the continental powers have entered into sundry alliances, which have been made public, and have held several meetings or Congresses, at which the principles of their political conduct have been declared. These things must necessarily have an effect upon the international law of the states of the world. If that effect be good, and according to the principles of that law, they deserve to be applauded. If, on the contrary, their effect and tendency be most dangerous, their principles wholly inadmissible, their pretensions such as would abolish every degree of national independence, then they are to be resisted.

I begin, Mr. Chairman, by drawing your attention to the treaty, concluded at Paris in September, 1815, between Russia, Prussia, and Austria, commonly called the Holy Alliance. This singular alliance appears to have originated with the Emperor of Russia; for we are informed that a draft of it was exhibited by him, personally, to a plenipotentiary of one of the great powers of Europe, before it was presented to the other sovereigns who ultimately signed it.* This instrument professes nothing, certainly, which is not extremely commendable and praiseworthy. It promises only that the contracting parties, both in relation to other states, and in regard to their own subjects, will observe the rules of justice and Christianity. In confirmation of these promises, it makes the most solemn and devout religious invocations. Now, although such an alliance is a novelty in European history, the world seems to have received this treaty, upon its first promulgation, with general charity. It was commonly understood as little or nothing more than an expression of thanks for the successful termination of the momentous contest, in which those sovereigns had been engaged. It still seems somewhat unaccountable, however, that these good resolutions should require to be confirmed by treaty. Who doubted that these august sovereigns would treat each other with justice, and rule their own subjects in mercy? And what necessity was there, for a solemn stipulation by treaty,

* Vide Lord Castlereagh's Speech in the House of Commons, February 3, 1816. Debates in Parliament, vol. 36, page 355; where also the Treaty may be found at length.

to ensure the performance of that, which is no more than the ordinary duty of every government? It would hardly be admitted by these sovereigns, that, by this compact, they suppose themselves bound to introduce an entire change, or any change, in the course of their own conduct. Nothing substantially new, certainly, can be supposed to have been intended. What principle, or what practice, therefore, called for this solemn declaration of the intention of the parties to observe the rules of religion and justice?

It is not a little remarkable, that a writer of reputation upon the Public Law, described, many years ago, not inaccurately, the character of this alliance: I allude to Puffendorff. "It seems useless," says he, "to frame any pacts or leagues, barely for the defence and support of universal peace; for, by such a league, nothing is superadded to the obligation of natural law, and no agreement is made for the performance of any thing, which the parties were not previously bound to perform; nor is the original obligation rendered firmer or stronger by such an addition. Men of any tolerable culture and civilization, might well be ashamed of entering into any such compact, the conditions of which imply only that the parties concerned shall not offend in any clear point of duty. Besides, we should be guilty of great irreverence towards God, should we suppose that his injunctions had not already laid a sufficient obligation upon us to act justly, unless we ourselves voluntarily consented to the same engagement: as if our obligation to obey his will, depended upon our own pleasure.

"If one engage to serve another, he does not set it down expressly and particularly among the terms

and conditions of the bargain, that he will not betray nor murder him, nor pillage nor burn his house. For the same reason, *that* would be a dishonourable engagement, in which men should bind themselves to act properly and decently, and not break the peace."*

Such were the sentiments of that eminent writer. How nearly he had anticipated the case of the Holy Alliance, will appear from comparing his observations with the preamble to that alliance, which is as follows:

"In the name of the most Holy and Indivisible Trinity, their Majesties the Emperor of Austria, the King of Prussia, and the Emperor of Russia,"— "solemnly declare, that the present act has no other object than to publish, in the face of the whole world, their fixed resolution, both in the administration of their respective states, and in their political relations with every other government, to take for their sole guide the precepts of that holy religion, namely, the precepts of justice, Christian charity, and peace, which, far from being applicable only to private concerns, must have an immediate influence on the councils of princes, and guide all their steps, as being the only means of consolidating human institutions, and remedying their imperfections."

This measure, however, appears principally important, as it was the first of a series, and was followed afterwards by others of a more direct and practical nature. These measures, taken together, profess to establish two principles, which the Allied

* Book 2, cap. 2.

Powers would enforce as a part of the law of the civilized world, and the enforcement of which is menaced by a million and a half of bayonets.

The first of these principles is, that all popular, or constitutional rights, are holden no otherwise than as grants from the crown. Society, upon this principle, has no rights of its own ; it takes good government, when it gets it, as a boon and a concession, but can demand nothing. It is to live in that favour which emanates from royal authority, and if it have the misfortune to lose that favour, there is nothing to protect it against any degree of injustice and oppression. It can rightfully make no endeavour for a change, by itself; its whole privilege is to receive the favours that may be dispensed by the sovereign power, and all its duty is described in the single word, *submission*. This is the plain result of the principal continental state papers ; indeed it is nearly the identical text of some of them.

The Laybach circular of May, 1821, alleges, "that useful and necessary changes in legislation and administration, ought only to emanate from the free will and intelligent conviction of those whom God has rendered responsible for power; all that deviates from this line necessarily leads to disorder, commotions, and evils, far more insufferable than those which they pretend to remedy."* Now, Sir, this principle would carry Europe back again, at once, into the middle of the dark ages. It is the old doctrine of the divine right of kings, advanced now, by new advocates, and sustained by a formidable mass of

* Annual Register, for 1821.

power. That the people hold their fundamental privileges, as matter of *concession*, or *indulgence*, from the sovereign power, is a sentiment not easy to diffuse in this age, any farther than it is enforced by the direct operation of military means. It is true, certainly, that some six centuries ago, the early founders of English liberty called the instrument which secured their rights a *Charter;* it was, indeed, a concession ; they had obtained it, sword in hand, from the king ; and, in many other cases, whatever was obtained, favourable to human rights, from the tyranny and despotism of the feudal sovereigns, was called by the names of *privileges* and *liberties*, as being matter of special favour. And, though we retain this *language* at the present time, the principle itself belongs to ages that have long passed by us. The civilized world has done with the enormous faith of many made for one. Society asserts its own rights, and alleges them to be original, sacred, and unalienable. It is not satisfied with having kind masters ; it demands a participation in its own government : and, in states much advanced in civilization, it urges this demand with a constancy and an energy, that cannot well, nor long, be resisted. There are, happily, enough of regulated governments in the world, and those among the most distinguished, to operate as constant examples, and to keep alive an unceasing panting in the bosoms of men, for the enjoyment of similar free institutions.

When the English revolution of 1688 took place, the English people did not content themselves with the example of Runnymede ; they did not build their hopes upon royal charters ; they did not, like the

Labach circular, suppose that all useful changes in constitutions and laws must proceed from those only whom God has rendered responsible for power. They were somewhat better instructed in the principles of civil liberty, or at least they were better lovers of those principles, than the sovereigns of Laybach. Instead of petitioning for charters, they *declared* their rights, and, while they offered to the family of Orange the crown with one hand, they held in the other an enumeration of those privileges which they did not profess to hold as favours, but which they *demanded* and *insisted upon*, as their undoubted rights.

I need not stop to observe, Mr. Chairman, how totally hostile are these doctrines of Laybach, to the fundamental principles of *our* government. They are in direct contradiction: the principles of good and evil are hardly more opposite. If these principles of the sovereigns be true, we are but in a state of rebellion, or of anarchy, and are only tolerated among civilized states, because it has not yet been convenient to conform us to the true standard.

But the second, and, if possible, the still more objectionable principle, avowed in these papers, is the right of forcible interference in the affairs of other states. A right to control nations in their desire to change their own government, wherever it may be conjectured, or pretended, that such change might furnish an *example* to the subjects of other states, is plainly and distinctly asserted. The same Congress that made the declaration at Laybach, had declared, before its removal from Troppau, "that the powers have an undoubted right to take a hostile attitude in

regard to those states in which the overthrow of the government may operate as an example."

There cannot, as I think, be conceived a more flagrant violation of public law, or national independence, than is contained in this declaration.

No matter what be the character of the government resisted; no matter with what weight the foot of the oppressor bears on the neck of the oppressed; if he struggle, or if he complain, he sets a dangerous example of resistance,—and from that moment he becomes an object of hostility to the most powerful potentates of the earth. I want words to express my abhorrence of this abominable principle. I trust every enlightened man throughout the world will oppose it, and that, especially, those who, like ourselves, are fortunately out of the reach of the bayonets that enforce it, will proclaim their detestation of it, in a tone both loud and decisive. The avowed object of such declarations is to preserve the peace of the world. But by what means is it proposed to preserve this peace? Simply, by bringing the power of all governments to bear against all subjects. Here is to be established a sort of double, or treble, or quadruple, or, for aught I know, a quintuple allegiance. An offence against one king is to be an offence against all kings, and the power of all is to be put forth for the punishment of the offender. A right to interfere in extreme cases, in the case of contiguous states, and where imminent danger is threatened to one by what is transpiring in another, is not without precedent in modern times, upon what has been called the law of vicinage; and when confined to extreme cases, and limited to a cer-

tain extent, it may perhaps be defended upon principles of necessity and self-defence. But to maintain that sovereigns may go to war upon the subjects of another state to *repress an example*, is monstrous indeed. What is to be the limit to such a principle, or to the practice growing out of it? What, in any case, but sovereign pleasure is to decide whether the example be good or bad? And what, under the operation of such rule, may be thought of OUR *example?* Why are we not as fair objects for the operation of the new principle, as any of those who may attempt to reform the condition of their government, on the other side of the Atlantic?

The ultimate effect of this alliance of sovereigns, for objects personal to themselves, or respecting only the permanence of their own power, must be the destruction of all just feeling, and all natural sympathy, between those who exercise the power of government and those who are subject to it. The old channels of mutual regard and confidence are to be dried up, or cut off. Obedience can now be expected no longer than it is enforced. Instead of relying on the affections of the governed, sovereigns are to rely on the affections and friendship of other sovereigns. There are, in short, no longer to be nations. Princes and people no longer are to unite for interests common to them both. There is to be an end of all patriotism, as a distinct national feeling. Society is to be divided horizontally; all sovereigns above, and all subjects below; the former coalescing for their own security, and for the more certain subjection of the undistinguished multitude beneath. This, Sir, is no picture, drawn by imagination. I

have hardly used language stronger than that in which the authors of this new system have commented on their own work. Mr. Chateaubriand, in his speech in the French Chamber of Deputies, in February last, declared, that he had a conference with the Emperor of Russia at Verona, in which that august sovereign uttered sentiments which appeared to him so precious, that he immediately hastened home, and wrote them down while yet fresh in his recollection. *"The Emperor declared,"* said he, *"that there can no longer be such a thing as an English, French, Russian, Prussian, or Austrian policy: there is henceforth but one policy, which, for the safety of all, should be adopted both by people and kings. It was for me first to show myself convinced of the principles upon which I founded the alliance; an occasion offered itself; the rising in Greece. Nothing certainly could occur more for my interests, for the interests of my people; nothing more acceptable to my country, than a religious war in Turkey: but I have thought I perceived in the troubles of the Morea, the sign of revolution, and I have held back. Providence has not put under my command* 800,000 *soldiers, to satisfy my ambition, but to protect religion, morality, and justice, and to secure the prevalence of those principles of order on which human society rests. It may well be permitted that kings may have public alliances to defend themselves against secret enemies."*

These, Sir, are the words which the French minister thought so important as that they deserved to be recorded; and I, too, Sir, am of the same opinion. But, if it be true that there is hereafter to be nei-

ther a Russian policy, nor a Prussian policy, nor an Austrian policy, nor a French policy, nor even, which yet I will not believe, an English policy; there will be, I trust in God, an *American* policy. If the authority of all these governments be hereafter to be mixed and blended, and to flow in one augmented current of prerogative, over the face of Europe, sweeping away all resistance in its course, it will yet remain for us to secure our own happiness, by the preservation of our own principles; which I hope we shall have the manliness to express on all proper occasions, and the spirit to defend in every extremity. The end and scope of this amalgamated policy is neither more nor less than this:—to interfere, *by force*, for any government, against any people who may resist it. Be the state of the people what it may, they shall not rise; be the government what it will, it shall not be opposed. The practical commentary has corresponded with the plain language of the text. Look at Spain, and at Greece. If men may not resist the Spanish inquisition, and the Turkish scimitar, what is there to which humanity must not submit? Stronger cases can never arise. Is it not proper for us, at all times—is it not our duty, at this time, to come forth, and deny, and condemn, these monstrous principles. Where, but here, and in one other place, are they likely to be resisted? They are advanced with equal coolness and boldness: and they are supported by immense power. The timid will shrink and give way—and many of the brave may be compelled to yield to force. Human liberty may yet, perhaps, be obliged to repose its principal hopes on the intelligence and the vigour of

the Saxon race. As far as depends on us, at least, I trust those hopes will not be disappointed; and that, to the extent which may consist with our own settled, pacific policy, our opinions and sentiments may be brought to act, on the right side, and to the right end, on an occasion which is, in truth, nothing less than a momentous question between an intelligent age, full of knowledge, thirsting for improvement, and quickened by a thousand impulses, and the most arbitrary pretensions, sustained by unprecedented power.

This asserted right of forcible intervention, in the affairs of other nations, is in open violation of the public law of the world. Who has authorized these learned doctors of Troppau, to establish new articles in this code? Whence are their diplomas? Is the whole world expected to acquiesce in principles, which entirely subvert the independence of nations? On the basis of this independence has been reared the beautiful fabric of international law. On the principle of this independence, Europe has seen a family of nations, flourishing within its limits, the small among the large, protected not always by power, but by a principle above power, by a sense of propriety and justice. On this principle the great commonwealth of civilized states has been hitherto upheld. There have been occasional departures, or violations, and always disastrous, as in the case of Poland; but, in general, the harmony of the system has been wonderfully preserved. In the production and preservation of this sense of justice, this predominating principle, the Christian religion has acted a main part. Christianity and civilization have laboured

together; it seems, indeed, to be a law of our human condition, that they can live and flourish only together. From their blended influence has arisen that delightful spectacle of the prevalence of reason and principle, over power and interest, so well described by one who was an honour to the age—

> "And sovereign *Law*, the *world's* collected will,
> O'er thrones and globes elate,
> Sits Empress—crowning good, repressing ill:
> Smit by her sacred frown,
> The fiend, *Discretion*, like a vapour, sinks,
> And e'en the all-dazzling crown
> Hides his faint rays, and at her bidding shrinks."

But this vision is past. While the teachers of Laybach give the rule, there will be no law but the law of the strongest.

It may now be required of me to show what interest *we* have, in resisting this new system. What is it to *us*, it may be asked, upon what principles, or what pretences, the European governments assert a right of interfering in the affairs of their neighbours? The thunder, it may be said, rolls at a distance. The wide Atlantic is between us and danger; and, however others may suffer, *we* shall remain safe.

I think it a sufficient answer to this, to say, that we are one of the nations; that we have an interest, therefore, in the preservation of that system of national law and national intercourse, which has heretofore subsisted, so beneficially for all. Our system of government, it should also be remembered, is, throughout, founded on principles utterly hostile to the new code; and, if we remain undisturbed by its operation, we shall owe our security, either to our

situation or our spirit. The enterprising character of the age, our own active commercial spirit, the great increase which has taken place in the intercourse between civilized and commercial states, have necessarily connected us with the nations of the earth, and given us a high concern in the preservation of those salutary principles, upon which that intercourse is founded. We have as clear an interest in international law, as individuals have in the laws of society.

But, apart from the soundness of the policy, on the ground of direct interest, we have, Sir, a duty, connected with this subject, which, I trust, we are willing to perform. What do *we* not owe to the cause of civil and religious liberty? to the principle of lawful resistance? to the principle that society has a right to partake in its own government? As the leading Republic of the world, living and breathing in these principles, and advanced, by their operation, with unequalled rapidity, in our career, shall we give *our* consent to bring them into disrepute and disgrace? It is neither ostentation nor boasting, to say, that there lie before this country, in immediate prospect, a great extent and height of power. We are borne along towards this, without effort, and not always even with a full knowledge of the rapidity of our own motion. Circumstances which never combined before, have combined in our favour, and a mighty current is setting us forward, which we could not resist, even if we would, and which, while we would stop to make an observation, and take the sun, has set us, at the end of the operation, far in advance of the place where we commenced it. Does it not become us, then, is it not a duty imposed on us,

to give our weight to the side of liberty and justice—to let mankind know that we are not tired of our own institutions—and to protest against the asserted power of altering, at pleasure, the law of the civilized world?

But, whatever we do, in this respect, it becomes us to do upon clear and consistent principles. There is an important topic in the Message, to which I have yet hardly alluded. I mean the rumoured combination of the European continental sovereigns, against the new established free states of South America. Whatever position this government may take on that subject, I trust it will be one which can be defended, on known and acknowledged grounds of right. The near approach, or the remote distance of danger, may affect policy, but cannot change principle. The same reason that would authorize us to protest against unwarrantable combinations to interfere between Spain and her former colonies, would authorize us equally to protest, if the same combination were directed against the smallest state in Europe, although our duty to ourselves, our policy, and wisdom, might indicate very different courses, as fit to be pursued by us in the two cases. We shall not, I trust, act upon the notion of dividing the world with the Holy Alliance, and complain of nothing done by them in their hemisphere, if they will not interfere with ours. At least this would not be such a course of policy as I could recommend or support. We have not offended, and, I hope, we do not intend to offend, in regard to South America, against any principle of national independence or of public law. We have done nothing, we shall do nothing, that

we need to hush up or to compromise, by forbearing to express our sympathy for the cause of the Greeks, or our opinion of the course which other governments have adopted in regard to them.

It may, in the next place, be asked, perhaps, supposing all this to be true, what can *we* do? Are we to go to war? Are we to interfere in the Greek cause, or any other European cause? Are we to endanger our pacific relations?—No, certainly not. What, then, the question recurs, remains for *us?* If we will not endanger our own peace; if we will neither furnish armies, nor navies, to the cause which we think the just one, what is there within *our* power?

Sir, this reasoning mistakes the age. The time has been, indeed, when fleets, and armies, and subsidies, were the principal reliances even in the best cause. But, happily for mankind, there has come a great change in this respect. Moral causes come into consideration, in proportion as the progress of knowledge is advanced; and the *public opinion* of the civilized world is rapidly gaining an ascendency over mere brutal force. It is already able to oppose the most formidable obstruction to the progress of injustice and oppression; and, as it grows more intelligent and more intense, it will be more and more formidable. It may be silenced by military power, but it cannot be conquered. It is elastic, irrepressible, and invulnerable to the weapons of ordinary warfare. It is that impassible, unextinguishable enemy of mere violence and arbitrary rule, which, like Milton's angels,

"Vital in every part,
"Cannot, but by annihilating, die."

Until this be propitiated or satisfied, it is vain for power to talk either of triumphs or of repose. No matter what fields are desolated, what fortresses surrendered, what armies subdued, or what provinces overrun. In the history of the year that has passed by us, and in the instance of unhappy Spain, we have seen the vanity of all triumphs, in a cause which violates the general sense of justice of the civilized world. It is nothing, that the troops of France have passed from the Pyrenees to Cadiz; it is nothing that an unhappy and prostrate nation has fallen before them; it is nothing that arrests, and confiscation, and execution, sweep away the little remnant of national resistance. There is an enemy that still exists to check the glory of these triumphs. It follows the conqueror back to the very scene of his ovations; it calls upon him to take notice that Europe, though silent, is yet indignant; it shows him that the sceptre of his victory is a barren sceptre; that it shall confer neither joy nor honour, but shall moulder to dry ashes in his grasp. In the midst of his exultation, it pierces his ear with the cry of injured justice, it denounces against him the indignation of an enlightened and civilized age; it turns to bitterness the cup of his rejoicing, and wounds him with the sting which belongs to the consciousness of having outraged the opinion of mankind.

In my own opinion, Sir, the Spanish nation is now nearer, not only in point of time, but in point of circumstance, to the acquisition of a regulated government, than at the moment of the French invasion. Nations must, no doubt, undergo these trials in their progress to the establishment of free institutions. The

very trials benefit them, and render them more capable both of obtaining and of enjoying the object which they seek.

I shall not detain the Committee, Sir, by laying before it any statistical, geographical, or commercial account of Greece. I have no knowledge on these subjects, which is not common to all. It is universally admitted, that, within the last thirty or forty years, the condition of Greece has been greatly improved. Her marine is at present respectable, containing the best sailors in the Mediterranean, better even, in that sea, than our own, as more accustomed to the long quarantines, and other regulations which prevail in its ports. The number of her seamen has been estimated as high as 50,000, but I suppose that estimate must be much too large. They have probably 150,000 tons of shipping. It is not easy to state an accurate account of Grecian population. The Turkish government does not trouble itself with any of the calculations of political economy, and there has never been such a thing as an accurate census, probably, in any part of the Turkish empire. In the absence of all official information, private opinions widely differ. By the tables which have been communicated, it would seem that there are 2,400,000 Greeks in Greece proper and the Islands; an amount, as I am inclined to think, somewhat overrated. There are, probably, in the whole of European Turkey, 5,000,000 Greeks, and 2,000,000 more in the Asiatic dominions of that power. The moral and intellectual progress of this numerous population, under the horrible oppression which crushes it, has been such as may well excite regard. Slaves, under bar-

barous masters, the Greeks have still aspired after the blessings of knowledge and civilization. Before the breaking out of the present revolution, they had established schools, and colleges, and libraries, and the press. Wherever, as in Scio, owing to particular circumstances, the weight of oppression was mitigated, the natural vivacity of the Greeks, and their aptitude for the arts, were discovered. Though certainly not on an equality with the civilized and Christian states of Europe, and how is it possible under such oppression as they endured that they should be? they yet furnished a striking contrast with their Tartar masters. It has been well said, that it is not easy to form a just conception of the nature of the despotism exercised over them. Conquest and subjugation, as used among European states, are inadequate modes of expression by which to denote the dominion of the Turks. A conquest, in the civilized world, is generally no more than an acquisition of a new part to the conquering country. It does not imply a never-ending bondage imposed upon the conquered, a perpetual mark, and opprobrious distinction between them and their masters; a bitter and unending persecution of their religion; an habitual violation of their rights of person and property, and the unrestrained indulgence towards them, of every passion which belongs to the character of a barbarous soldiery. Yet, such is the state of Greece. The Ottoman power over them, obtained originally by the sword, is constantly preserved by the same means. Wherever it exists, it is a mere military power. The religious and civil code of the state, being both fixed in the Alcoran, and equally the ob-

ject of an ignorant and furious faith, have been found equally incapable of change. "The Turk," it has been said, "has been *encamped* in Europe for four centuries." He has hardly any more participation in European manners, knowledge, and arts, than when he crossed the Bosphorus. But this is not the worst of it. The power of the empire is fallen into anarchy, and as the principle which belongs to the head belongs also to the parts, there are as many despots as there are pachas, beys, and visiers. Wars are almost perpetual, between the sultan and some rebellious governor of a province; and in the conflict of these despotisms, the people are necessarily ground between the upper and the nether millstone. In short, the Christian subjects of the sublime Porte, feel daily all the miseries which flow from despotism, from anarchy, from slavery, and from religious persecution. If any thing yet remains to heighten such a picture, let it be added, that every office in the government is not only actually, but professedly, venal;—the pachalics, the visierates, the cadiships, and whatsoever other denomination may denote the depositary of power. In the whole world, Sir, there is no such oppression *felt*, as by the Christian Greeks. In various parts of India, to be sure, the government is bad enough; but then it is the government of barbarians over barbarians, and the *feeling* of oppression is, of course, not so keen. There the oppressed are perhaps not better than their oppressors; but in the case of Greece, there are millions of Christian men, not without knowledge, not without refinement, not without a strong thirst for all the pleasures of civilized life, trampled into the very

earth, century after century, by a pillaging, savage, relentless soldiery. Sir, the case is unique. There exists, and has existed, nothing like it. The world has no such misery to show; there is no case in which Christian communities can be called upon, with such emphasis of appeal.

But I have said enough, Mr. Chairman, indeed I need have said nothing to satisfy the House, that it must be some new combination of circumstances, or new views of policy in the cabinets of Europe, which have caused this interesting struggle not merely to be regarded with indifference, but to be marked with opprobrium. The very statement of the case, as a contest between the Turks and Greeks, sufficiently indicates what must be the feeling of every individual, and every government, that is not biassed by a particular interest, or a particular feeling, to disregard the dictates of justice and humanity.

And now, Sir, what has been the conduct pursued by the Allied Powers, in regard to this contest? When the revolution broke out, the sovereigns were in Congress at Laybach; and the papers of that assembly sufficiently manifest their sentiments. They proclaimed their abhorrence of those "criminal combinations which had been formed in the eastern parts of Europe;" and, although it is possible that this denunciation was aimed, more particularly, at the disturbances in the provinces of Wallachia and Moldavia, yet no exception is made, from its general terms, in favour of those events in Greece, which were properly the commencement of her revolution, and which could not but be well known at Laybach, before the date of these declarations. Now it must be

remembered, that Russia was a leading party in this denunciation of the efforts of the Greeks to achieve their liberation; and it cannot but be expected by Russia that the world shall also remember what part she herself has heretofore acted, in the same concern. It is notorious, that within the last half century she has again and again, excited the Greeks to rebellion against the Porte, and that she has constantly kept alive in them the hope that she would, one day, by her own great power, break the yoke of their oppressor. Indeed, the earnest attention with which Russia has regarded Greece, goes much farther back than to the time I have mentioned. Ivan the third, in 1482, having espoused a Grecian princess, heiress of the last Greek emperor, discarded *St. George* from the Russian arms, and adopted in its stead the *Greek two-headed black eagle*, which has continued in the Russian arms to the present day. In virtue of the same marriage, the Russian princes claimed the Greek throne as their inheritance.

Under Peter the Great, the policy of Russia developed itself more fully. In 1696, he rendered himself master of Azoph, and in 1698, obtained the right to pass the Dardanelles, and to maintain, by that route, commercial intercourse with the Mediterranean. He had emissaries throughout Greece, and particularly applied himself to gain the clergy. He adopted the *Labarum* of Constantine, "*In hoc signo vinces;*" and medals were struck, with the inscription, "*Petrus I. Russo-Græcorum Imperator.*" In whatever new direction the principles of the Holy Alliance may now lead the politics of Russia, or whatever course she may suppose Christian-

ity now prescribes to her, in regard to the Greek cause, the time has been when she professed to be contending for that cause, as identified with Christianity. The white banner under which the soldiers of Peter the first usually fought, bore, as its inscription, "*In the name of the Prince, and for our country.*" Relying on the aid of the Greeks, in his war with the Porte, he changed the white flag to red, and displayed on it the words, "*In the name of God, and for Christianity.*" The unfortunate issue of this war is well known. Though Anne and Elizabeth, the successors of Peter, did not possess his active character, they kept up a constant communication with Greece, and held out hopes of restoring the Greek empire. Catharine the second, as is well known, excited a general revolt in 1769. A Russian fleet appeared in the Mediterranean, and a Russian army was landed in the Morea. The Greeks in the end were disgusted by being required to take an oath of allegiance to Russia, and the empress was disgusted because they refused to take it. In 1774, peace was signed between Russia and the Porte, and the Greeks of the Morea were left to their fate. By this treaty the Porte acknowledged the independence of the khan of the Crimea; a preliminary step to the acquisition of that country by Russia. It is not unworthy of remark, as a circumstance which distinguished this from most other diplomatic transactions, that it conceded the right to the cabinet of St. Petersburg, of intervention in the interior affairs of Turkey, in regard to whatever concerned the religion of the Greeks. The cruelties and massacres that happened to the Greeks after the

peace between Russia and the Porte, notwithstanding the general pardon which had been stipulated for them, need not now to be recited. Instead of retracing the deplorable picture, it is enough to say, that in this respect the past is justly reflected in the present. The empress soon after invaded and conquered the Crimea, and on one of the gates of Kerson, its capital, caused to be inscribed, "*The road to Bysantium.*" The present Emperor, on his accession to the throne, manifested an intention to adopt the policy of Catharine the II. as his own, and the world has not been right, in all its suspicions, if a project for the partition of Turkey did not form a part of the negotiations of Napoleon and Alexander at Tilsit.

All this course of policy seems suddenly to be changed Turkey is no longer regarded, it would appear, as an object of partition or acquisition, and Greek revolts have, all at once, become, according to the declaration of Laybach, "criminal combinations." The recent congress at Verona exceeded its predecessor at Laybach, in its denunciations of the Greek struggle. In the circular of the 14th of December, 1822, it declared the Grecian resistance to the Turkish power to be rash and culpable, and lamented that "the firebrand of rebellion had been thrown into the Ottoman empire." This rebuke and crimination, we know to have proceeded on those settled principles of conduct, which the continental powers had prescribed for themselves. The sovereigns saw, as well as others, the real condition of the Greeks; they knew, as well as others, that it was most natural and most justifiable, that they should

endeavour, at whatever hazard, to change that condition. They knew, that they, themselves, or at least one of them, had more than once urged the Greeks to similar efforts; that they, themselves, had thrown the same firebrand into the midst of the Ottoman empire. And yet, so much does it seem to be their fixed object to discountenance whatsoever threatens to disturb the actual government of any country, that, Christians as they were, and allied as they professed to be, for purposes most important to human happiness and religion, they have not hesitated to declare to the world, that they have wholly forborne to exercise any compassion to the Greeks, simply because they thought that they saw, in the struggles of the Morea, the sign of revolution. This, then, is coming to a plain, practical result. The Grecian revolution has been discouraged, discountenanced, and denounced, for no reason but because *it is a* revolution. Independent of all inquiry into the reasonableness of its causes, or the enormity of the oppression which produced it; regardless of the peculiar claims which Greece possesses upon the civilized world; and regardless of what has been their own conduct towards her for a century; regardless of the interest of the Christian religion, the sovereigns at Verona seized upon the case of the Greek revolution, as one above all others calculated to illustrate the fixed principles of their policy. The abominable rule of the Porte on one side, the valour and the sufferings of the Christian Greeks on the other, furnished a case likely to convince even an incredulous world of the sincerity of the professions of the Allied Powers. They embraced the occasion, with apparent ardour; and the world, I trust, is satisfied.

We see here, Mr. Chairman, the direct and actual application of that system which I have attempted to describe. We see it in the very case of Greece. We learn, authentically and indisputably, that the Allied Powers, holding that all changes in legislation and administration ought to proceed from kings alone, were wholly inexorable to the sufferings of the Greeks, and wholly hostile to their success. Now it is upon this practical result of the principle of the continental powers, that I wish this House to intimate its opinion. The great question is a question of principle. Greece is only the signal instance of the application of that principle. If the principle be right, if we esteem it conformable to the law of nations, if we have nothing to say against it, or if we deem ourselves unfit to express an opinion on the subject, then, of course, no resolution ought to pass. If, on the other hand, we see in the declarations of the Allied Powers, principles not only utterly hostile to our own free institutions, but hostile also to the independence of all nations, and altogether opposed to the improvement of the condition of human nature; if, in the instance before us, we see a most striking exposition and application of those principles, and if we deem our own opinions to be entitled to any weight in the estimation of mankind; then, I think, it is our duty to adopt some such measure as the proposed resolution.

It is worthy of observation, Sir, that as early as July, 1821, Baron Strogonoff, the Russian minister at Constantinople, represented to the Porte, that, if the undistinguished massacres of the Greeks, both of such as were in open resistance, and of those who remain-

ed patient in their submission, were continued, and should become a settled habit, they would give just cause of war against the Porte to all Christian states. This was in 1821. It was followed, early in the next year, by that indescribable enormity, that appalling monument of barbarian cruelty, the destruction of Scio; a scene I shall not attempt to describe; a scene from which human nature shrinks shuddering away; a scene having hardly a parallel in the history of fallen man. This scene, too, was quickly followed by the massacres in Cyprus; and all these things were perfectly known to the Christian powers assembled at Verona. Yet these powers, instead of acting upon the case supposed by Baron Strogonoff, and which, one would think, had been then fully made out; instead of being moved by any compassion for the sufferings of the Greeks; these powers, these Christian powers, rebuke their gallantry, and insult their sufferings, by accusing them of "throwing a firebrand into the Ottoman empire."

Such, Sir, appear to me to be the principles on which the continental powers of Europe have agreed hereafter to act; and this, an eminent instance of the application of those principles.

I shall not detain the Committee, Mr. Chairman, by any attempt to recite the events of the Greek struggle, up to the present time. Its origin may be found, doubtless, in that improved state of knowledge, which, for some years, has been gradually taking place in that country. The emancipation of the Greeks has been a subject frequently discussed in modern times. They themselves are represented as having a vivid remembrance of the distinction of their ancestors, not

unmixed with an indignant feeling, that civilized and Christian Europe should not, ere now, have aided them in breaking their intolerable fetters.

In 1816, a society was founded in Vienna, for the encouragement of Grecian literature. It was connected with a similar institution at Athens, and another in Thessaly, called the "Gymnasium of Mount Pelion." The treasury and general office of the institution was established at Munich. No political object was avowed by these institutions, probably none contemplated. Still, however, they have, no doubt, had their effect in hastening that condition of things, in which the Greeks felt competent to the establishment of their independence. Many young men have been, for years, annually sent to the universities in the western states of Europe for their education; and, after the general pacification of Europe, many military men, discharged from other employment, were ready to enter even into so unpromising a service as that of the revolutionary Greeks.

In 1820, war commenced between the Porte and Ali, the well known pacha of Albania. Differences existed also with Persia, and with Russia. In this state of things, at the beginning of 1821, an insurrection appears to have broken out in Moldavia, under the direction of Alexander Ypsilanti, a well educated soldier, who had been major-general in the Russian service. From his character, and the number of those who seemed disposed to join him, he was supposed to be countenanced by the court of St. Petersburg. This, however, was a great mistake, which the emperor, then at Laybach, took an early opportunity to rectify. The Porte, it would

seem, however, alarmed at these occurrences in the northern provinces, caused search to be made of all vessels entering the Black Sea, lest arms or other military means should be sent in that manner to the insurgents. This proved inconvenient to the commerce of Russia, and caused some unsatisfactory correspondence between the two powers. It may be worthy of remark, as an exhibition of national character, that, agitated by these appearances of intestine commotion, the sultan issued a proclamation, calling on all true musselmans to renounce the pleasures of social life, to prepare arms and horses, and to return to the manner of their ancestors, the life of the plains. The Turk seems to have thought that he had, at last, caught something of the dangerous contagion of European civilization, and that it was necessary to reform his habits, by recurring to the original manners of military roving barbarians.

It was about this time, that is to say, at the commencement of 1821, that the Revolution burst out in various parts of Greece and the Isles. Circumstances, certainly, were not unfavourable, as one portion of the Turkish army was employed in the war against Ali Pacha in Albania, and another part in the provinces north of the Danube. The Greeks soon possessed themselves of the open country of the Morea, and drove their enemy into the fortresses. Of these, that of Tripolitza, with the city, fell into the hands of the Greeks, in the course of the summer. Having after these first movements obtained time to breathe, it became, of course, an early object to establish a government. For this purpose delegates of the people assembled, under that name

which describes the assembly in which we ourselves sit, that name which "freed the Atlantic," a *Congress.* A writer, who undertakes to render to the civilized world that service which was once performed by Edmund Burke, I mean the compiler of the English Annual Register, asks, *by what authority* this assembly could call itself a *Congress.* Simply, Sir, by the same authority, by which the people of the United States have given the same name to their own legislature. We, at least, should be naturally inclined to think, not only as far as names, but things also, are concerned, that the Greeks could hardly have begun their revolution under better auspices; since they have endeavoured to render applicable to themselves the general principles of our form of government, as well as its name. This constitution went into operation at the commencement of the next year. In the mean time, the war with Ali Pacha was ended, he having surrendered, and being afterwards assassinated, by an instance of treachery and perfidy, which, if it had happened elsewhere than under the government of the Turks, would have deserved notice. The negotiation with Russia, too, took a turn unfavourable to the Greeks. The great point upon which Russia insisted, beside the abandonment of the measure of searching vessels bound to the Black Sea, was, that the Porte should withdraw its armies from the neighbourhood of the Russian frontiers; and the immediate consequence of this, when effected, was to add so much more to the disposable force, ready to be employed against the Greeks. These events seemed to have left the whole force of the Empire.

at the commencement of 1822, in a condition to be employed against the Greek rebellion; and, accordingly, very many anticipated the immediate destruction of their cause. The event, however, was ordered otherwise. Where the greatest effort was made, it was met and defeated. Entering the Morea with an army which seemed capable of bearing down all resistance, the Turks were nevertheless defeated and driven back, and pursued beyond the isthmus, within which, as far as it appears, from that time to the present, they have not been able to set their foot.

It was in April, of this year, that the destruction of Scio took place. That island, a sort of appanage of the Sultana mother, enjoyed many privileges peculiar to itself. In a population of 130,000 or 140,000, it had no more than 2000 or 3000 Turks; indeed, by some accounts, not near as many. The absence of these ruffian masters, had, in some degree, allowed opportunity for the promotion of knowledge, the accumulation of wealth, and the general cultivation of society. Here was the seat of the modern Greek literature; here were libraries, printing presses, and other establishments, which indicate some advancement in refinement and knowledge. Certain of the inhabitants of Samos, it would seem, envious of this comparative happiness of Scio, landed upon the island, in an irregular multitude, for the purpose of compelling its inhabitants to make common cause with their countrymen against their oppressors. These, being joined by the peasantry, marched to the city, and drove the Turks into the castle. The Turkish fleet, lately reinforced from

Egypt, happened to be in the neighbouring seas, and learning these events, landed a force on the island of 15,000 men. There was nothing to resist such an army. These troops immediately entered the city, and began an indiscriminate massacre. The city was fired; and, in four days, the fire and the sword of the Turk, rendered the beautiful Scio a clotted mass of blood and ashes. The details are too shocking to be recited. Forty thousand women and children, unhappily saved from the general destruction, were afterwards sold in the market of Smyrna, and sent off into distant and hopeless servitude. Even on the wharves of our own cities, it has been said, have been sold the utensils of those hearths which now exist no longer. Of the whole population which I have mentioned, not above 900 persons were left living upon the island. I will only repeat, Sir, that these tragical scenes were as fully known at the Congress of Verona, as they are now known to us; and it is not too much to call on the powers that constituted that Congress, in the name of conscience, and in the name of humanity, to tell us, if there be nothing even in these unparalleled excesses of Turkish barbarity, to excite a sentiment of compassion; nothing which they regard as so objectionable as even the very idea of popular resistance to power.

The events of the year which has just passed by, as far as they have become known to us, have been even more favourable to the Greeks, than those of the year preceding. I omit all details, as being as well known to others as to myself. Suffice it to say, that with no other enemy to contend with, and no diversion of his force to other objects, the Porte has not

been able to carry the war into the Morea ; and that, by the last accounts, its armies were acting defensively in Thessaly. I pass over also the naval engagements of the Greeks, although that is a mode of warfare in which they are calculated to excel, and in which they have already performed actions of such distinguished skill and bravery, as would draw applause upon the best mariners in the world. The present state of the war would seem to be, that the Greeks possess the whole of the Morea, with the exception of the three fortresses of Patras, Coron and Modon; all Candia, but one fortress; and most of the other islands. They possess the citadel of Athens, Missolunghi, and several other places in Livadia. They have been able to act on the offensive and to carry the war beyond the isthmus. There is no reason to believe their marine is weakened ; probably, on the other hand, it is strengthened. But, what is most of all important, they have obtained time and experience. They have awakened a sympathy throughout Europe and throughout America; and they have formed a government which seems suited to the emergency of their condition.

Sir, they have done much. It would be great injustice to compare their achievements with our own. We began our revolution, already possessed of government, and, comparatively, of civil liberty. Our ancestors had, for centuries, been accustomed in a great measure to govern themselves. They were well acquainted with popular elections and legislative assemblies, and the general principles and practice of free governments. They had little else to do than to throw off the paramount authority of the

parent state. Enough was still left, both of law and of organization, to conduct society in its accustomed course, and to unite men together for a common object. The Greeks, of course, could act with little concert at the beginning; they were unaccustomed to the exercise of power, without experience, with limited knowledge, without aid, and surrounded by nations, which, whatever claims the Greeks might seem to have had upon them, have afforded them nothing but discouragement and reproach. They have held out, however, for three campaigns; and that, at least, is something. Constantinople and the northern provinces have sent forth thousands of troops;—they have been defeated. Tripoli, and Algiers, and Egypt, have contributed their marine contingents;—they have not kept the ocean. Hordes of Tartars have crossed the Bosphorus;—they have died where the Persians died. The powerful monarchies in the neighbourhood have denounced their cause, and admonished them to abandon it, and submit to their fate. They have answered them, that, although two hundred thousand of their countrymen have offered up their lives, there yet remain lives to offer; and that it is the determination of *all*, "yes, of ALL," to persevere until they shall have established their liberty, or until the power of their oppressors shall have relieved them from the burthen of existence.

It may now be asked, perhaps, whether the expression of our own sympathy, and that of the country, may do them good? I hope it may. It may give them courage and spirit, it may assure them of public regard, teach them that they are not wholly forgotten by the civilized world, and inspire them

with constancy in the pursuit of their great end. At any rate, Sir, it appears to me, that the measure which I have proposed is due to our own character, and called for by our own duty. When we shall have discharged that duty. we may leave the rest to the disposition of Providence.

I do not see how it can be doubted, that this measure is entirely *pacific* I profess my inability to perceive that it has any possible tendency to involve our neutral relations. If the resolution pass, it is not, necessarily, to be immediately acted on. It will not be acted on at all, unless, in the opinion of the President, a proper and safe occasion for acting upon it shall arise. If we adopt the resolution to-day, our relations with every foreign state will be to-morrow precisely what they now are. The resolution will be sufficient to express our sentiments on the subjects to which I have adverted. Useful to that purpose, it can be mischievous to no purpose. If the topic were properly introduced into the Message, it cannot be improperly introduced into discussion in this House. If it were proper, which no one doubts, for the President to express his opinions upon it, it cannot, I think, be improper for us to express ours. The only certain effect of this resolution is to express, in a form usual in bodies constituted like this, our approbation of the general sentiment of the Message. Do we wish to withhold that approbation? *The Resolution confers on the President no new power, nor does it enjoin on him the exercise of any new duty; nor does it hasten him in the discharge of any existing duty.*

I cannot imagine that this resolution can add any

thing to those excitements which it has been supposed, I think very causelessly, might possibly provoke the Turkish government to acts of hostility. There is already the Message, expressing the hope of success to the Greeks, and disaster to the Turks, in a much stronger manner than is to be implied from the terms of this resolution. There is the correspondence between the Secretary of State and the Greek Agent in London, already made public, in which similar wishes are expressed, and a continuance of the correspondence apparently invited. I might add to this, the unexampled burst of feeling which this cause has called forth from all classes of society, and the notorious fact of pecuniary contributions made throughout the country for its aid and advancement. After all this, whoever can see cause of danger to our pacific relations from the adoption of this resolution, has a keener vision than I can pretend to. Sir, these is no augmented danger; there is *no danger*. The question comes at last to this, whether, on a subject of this sort, this House holds an opinion which is worthy to be expressed?

Even suppose, Sir, an Agent or Commissioner were to be immediately sent,—a measure which I myself believe to be the proper one,—there is no breach of neutrality, nor any just cause of offence. Such an agent, of course, would not be accredited; he would not be a public minister. The object would be inquiry and information; inquiry, which we have a right to make; information, which we are interested to possess. If a dismemberment of the Turkish empire be taking place, or has already taken place; if a new state be rising, or be already risen, in the

Mediterranean, who can doubt, that, without any breach of neutrality, we may inform ourselves of these events, for the government of our own concerns?

The Greeks have declared the Turkish coasts in a state of blockade; may we not inform ourselves whether this blockade be *nominal* or *real?* and, of course, whether it shall be regarded or disregarded? The greater our trade may happen to be with Smyrna, a consideration which seems to have alarmed some gentlemen, the greater is the reason, in my opinion, why we should seek to be accurately informed of those events which may affect its safety.

It seems to me impossible, therefore, for any reasonable man to imagine, that this resolution can expose us to the resentment of the sublime Porte.

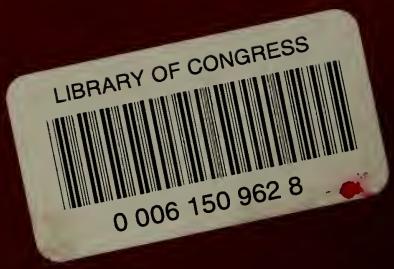
As little reason is there for fearing its consequences upon the conduct of the Allied Powers. They may, very naturally, dislike our sentiments upon the subject of the Greek Revolution; but what those sentiments are, they will much more explicitly learn in the President's Message than in this resolution. They might, indeed, prefer that we should express no dissent upon the doctrines which they have avowed, and the application which they have made of those doctrines to the case of Greece. But I trust we are not disposed to leave them in any doubt as to our sentiments upon these important subjects. They have expressed their opinions, and do not call that expression of opinion, *an interference;* in which respect they are right, as the expression of opinion, in such cases, is not such an *interference* as would justify the Greeks in considering the powers as at war with them. For the same reason, any expression which

we may make, of different principles and different sympathies, is no *interference*. No one would call the President's Message an *interference;* and yet it is much stronger, in that respect, than this resolution. If either of them could be construed to be an *interference*, no doubt it would be improper, at least it would be so, according to my view of the subject; for the very thing which I have attempted to resist in the course of these observations, is the right of foreign interference. But neither the Message nor the resolution has that character. There is not a power in Europe that can suppose, that, in expressing our opinions on this occasion, we are governed by any desire of aggrandizing ourselves, or of injuring others. We do no more than to maintain those established principles, in which we have an interest in common with other nations, and to resist the introduction of new principles and new rules, calculated to destroy the relative independence of states, and particularly hostile to the whole fabric of our own government.

I close, then, Sir, with repeating, that the object of this resolution is, to avail ourselves of the interesting occasion of the Greek revolution, to make our protest against the doctrines of the Allied Powers; both as they are laid down in principle, and as they are applied in practice.

I think it right too, Sir, not to be unseasonable in the expression of our regard, and, as far as that goes, in a ministration of our consolation, to a long oppressed and now struggling people. I am not of those who would in the hour of utmost peril, withhold such encouragement as might be properly and lawfully given, and when the crisis should be past, over-

whelm the rescued sufferer with kindness and caresses. The Greeks address the civilized world with a pathos, not easy to be resisted. They invoke our favour by more moving considerations than can well belong to the condition of any other people. They stretch out their arms to the Christian communities of the earth, beseeching them, by a generous recollection of their ancestors, by the consideration of their own desolated and ruined cities and villages, by their wives and children, sold into an accursed slavery, by their own blood, which they seem willing to pour out like water, by the common faith, and in the Name, which unites all Christians, that they would extend to them, at least some token of compassionate regard.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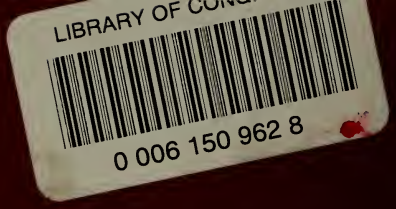
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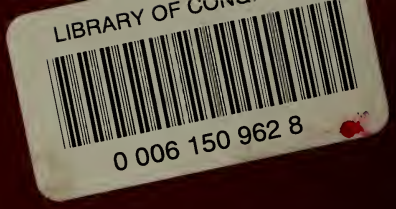
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